Cracks in Rail Tracks

4708. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item which appeared on 22nd February, 2001 in the 'Indian Express' under the heading "Railways can't cover up cracks in its tracks";

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken by Government for improving financial position of the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The news-item was published on 22.02.2001 prior to the presentation of the Railway Budget for 2001-02 on 26.02.2001 and is, therefore, speculative to a large extent. Specific details of the various issues raised in the news-item as also the measures being taken to improve the financial position of the Railways have been spelt out in the Railway Budget documents for 2001-02, since presented to Parliament.

Public toilets near Rail Tracks

4709. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Railways plans clean up behind closed doors" as reported in the Statesman dated 7th March, 2001;

(b) if so, whether the Railways have started constructing public toilets in all the slum areas near rail tracks; and

(c) whether such a step is going to promote slums near rail tracks; if so, whether Government propose to re-examine the issue; if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Hon'ble High Court, Delhi have directed the Railways